

Samuel Hart Farmhouse  
(Neck Farm)  
Moore Park, Forest Glen  
Old Saybrook  
Middlesex County  
Connecticut

HABS No. CT-365

HABS  
CONN,  
4-SAYBRO,  
8-

WRITTEN DESCRIPTIVE AND HISTORICAL DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

SAMUEL HART FARMHOUSE  
(Neck Farm)

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Location: Moore Park, Forest Glen, Old Saybrook, Conn. Driveway is entered from Forest Glen Road

Present Owner: Mr. and Mrs. Emilio Garafalo, Post Office Box 72, Old Saybrook

Present Use: Dwelling

Present Occupant: Owners

Statement of Significance: The Samuel Hart Farmhouse is a fine example of a center-al-chimney, five-bay facade house. Although some additions and alterations have been made through the years, the main original house retains panelling and other original features of interest. The land on which it stands had originally belonged to George Fenwick, the only one of the original "patentees" who came to Saybrook in the 17th century. From Fenwick it passed into the Lynde family of Massachusetts who built the house. The house has been owned by members of the Lynde, Hert, Jarvis and Colt families giving it great importance in Saybrook history.

Historical Information: The Saybrook land records tell us that the property on which the house is located was originally owned by George Fenwick, one of the original gentlemen to whom the Saybrook area was granted by the Duke of Warwick in the 17th century. The settlement was intended as a haven for rich Puritans but with the improvement of the Puritan political position in England, none of these particular gentlemen came to Saybrook except Fenwick. He arrived in 1639 to govern the settlement and returned to England after the death of his wife about ten years later. After Fenwick died he left his Saybrook lands to his sister Mrs. John Cullick and her children. Mrs. Cullick married for a second time to Richard Ely and her daughter married Benjamin Batten. A dispute between Batten and Ely led to a division of the land between them. Before 1675, when the records outline a matter to be settled about fences, Batten and his wife Elizabeth had sold this land to Simon Lynde of Boston.

Simon Lynde had emigrated to Boston in 1650 and was a rich merchant even at that early date. His son Nathaniel was born in Boston in 1659 and in 1683 he married Susanna, daughter of Deputy Governor Willoughby and moved to Saybrook. His father Simon then gave him most of the land in Saybrook including that on which the house now stands. At the same time Nathaniel also received from his father a parcel of land that Nathaniel later granted to the Collegiate School, which was later to become Yale University. The land was given to the school on the condition that it remain in Saybrook which did not happen. Therefore that land reverted back to Nathaniel Lynde when the school removed to New Haven.

Although the house has been given the date of 1767, it is also said that the house was built by Nathaniel Lynde for his son with the idea that trade in Saybrook could be as profitable as in Massachusetts. If this is true, the proper date for the house would probably be in the first quarter of the 18th century. Knowing that the Lynde family owned the peninsula of land which

which now comprises Fenwick and Cornfield Point, this seems logical. The house would originally have had access to the entire peninsula and since it is on a spot of high land it would have overlooked the waters of South cove before the area was developed as it is today.

In 1770, Samuel Hart, the son of Rev. William Hart, married Lucy Bushnell who was the granddaughter of Nathaniel Lynde, thus bringing together the Hart, Lynde and Bushnell families in another family alliance typical of 18th-century Saybrook. According to tradition, the wedding took place in this house and shortly afterward Samuel built a new house for his bride. His wife, Lucy, did inherit a great deal of the land at Lynde's Neck as the area was then called. An 1853 map shows the house with the name Jarvis, another prominent family united by marriage with Hart. An 1874 map shows the name Sisson which may have been a tenant rather than an owner.

In later years members of the Beach family lived here and they were also married into the Jarvis-Hart-Lynde families. It is presently owned by Mr. and Mrs. Garafalo who purchased it after a real estate developer had purchased a large tract of the surrounding land for the modern housing development which is now in the area.

Known Alterations  
and Additions:

The original main house is easily identified by its large central chimney. An addition on the south which is now the dining room was made in the 1920's for a tea room. The present kitchen ell seems to be very old on the first floor, but several rooms added on the second floor are of 20th-century origin. The present foundation of large brownstone blocks is only the above-ground portion of the stone foundation in the cellar and is assumed to have been added during some alteration.

Architectural  
Features of Note:

Comments here will be limited to the original house, the main house with the chimney. The floor plan is typical of this type of house: small entry porch with a chamber on each side and one long chamber across the back of the house. It has a five-bay facade with a frontispiece entrance in the center. The entrance is composed of fluted pilasters on each side supporting a frieze and cornice decorated with a carved flower motif. There are four lights over the door. The windows are double-rung sash with 12-over-12 lights on the first floor and 12-over-8 on the second floor.

The exterior is covered with cedar shingles and the steeply pitched gable roof is wood-shingled with one trap door. There is a moulded main cornice which also forms the cornice returns.

Recent work has revealed plank construction and chestnut beams. Many original interior features are of particular interest. There are many doors with moulded panels in various arrangements. Much of the hardware is original or good later additions.

A narrow enclosed stairway with winders and a straight run ascends to the second floor from the entrance porch, just in front of the chimney. Another stairway is in the large back room. New flooring has been installed on the first floor including an interesting "spring floor" on North east room. Wide floor boards remain on most of the second floor.

Old plaster remains on most of the walls and also some plain board wainscot in the back room and panelled wainscot in the porch. The various fireplaces and the panelling which surrounds them is of special interest. The very large fireplace with oven and wide hearth in the large back room was undoubtedly the cooking fireplace and it is topped with a simple mantel shelf. The fireplace wall in the southeast room on the first floor has moulded panelling and cornice. Fluted pilasters at either side of the fireplace are topped with carved flowers similar to those on the front outside entrance.

The northeast room on the first floor has much original work and also has some later "improvements" which are quite interesting such as the fireframe, mantel and a spring floor for dancing. There is some salvage dentil work which is really too large for the room. What makes it interesting is that it can also be seen in other Saybrook houses where some salvage panelling has been installed, notable the Gen. William Hart house.

The upstairs fireplaces all have panelled walls. The northeast room has what the present owner has been informed is Stebbins panelling surrounding the rectangular fireplace opening. This includes moulded panels and a course of modillion brackets at the top. There is a very simple two-panel door on each side of the fireplace in the southeast room. These and the simple architrave trim around the fireplace opening seem to be original.

Prepared by:  
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